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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-first session
13 May-7 June 1991
Agenda item 7

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Boris GOUDIMA (Ukrainian Soviet
Socialist Republic)

III. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993

Section 24. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. At its 40th meeting on 5 June, the Commission considered section 24 of the proposed programmed budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the role that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) had played in the economic and social development of the region. While recognizing that the General Assembly had not recommended any criteria for determining the level of resources to be allocated to each regional commission, or indeed among programmes, some delegations expressed concern about what they considered to be the relatively low level of resources proposed for ESCAP.

3. One delegation stated that the low level of resources for ESCAP was not acceptable, considering that the activities undertaken by ESCAP covered a region which included more than half the world's population.
4. One delegation questioned the effectiveness of the many high priority designations. The Committee noted, however, that at its forty-seventh session ESCAP had approved the priority designations at the subprogramme level and that the designation of priorities at the output level was tentative at this stage. The Committee further noted that ESCAP's proposals would be reviewed by the Commission at its forty-eighth session in 1992.
5. The Committee expressed appreciation for the efforts made to redeploy resources from executive management and support services to the substantive programmes and noted that resources had been redeployed among some subprogrammes in order to achieve the objectives of the medium-term plan. At the same time, the Committee expressed concern that a major portion of the increased resources was for programme support, but noted that it was for the replacement of the central computer system which would ultimately facilitate the work of the substantive programmes.
6. The Committee also noted that some of the increased resources proposed were for the new conference complex which was to become operational during 1992-1993.
7. A number of delegations questioned the usefulness and effectiveness of the large number of publications proposed.
8. A number of delegations expressed concern at the projected decrease in extrabudgetary resources.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee expressed support for the work of ESCAP carried out under section 24 of the proposed programme budget.
10. The Committee recommended that ESCAP should continue its efforts to evaluate its publications.
11. The Committee also recommended that ESCAP should review its priority designations at the output level and urged that resources allocated for subprogrammes should be commensurate with their priority designations.
12. Noting the reservations expressed by some delegations on the overall level of resources, the Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.
